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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/62/403)*]

62/217. International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 51/122 of 13 December 1996, 54/68 of 6 December 1999, 59/2 of 20 October 2004 and 61/110 and 61/111 of 14 December 2006,

Recognizing the remarkable convergence of anniversaries of space activities in 2007, which includes the fiftieth anniversary of the advent of the space age with the launch into outer space of the first artificial Earth satellite, Sputnik I, on 4 October 1957; the fortieth anniversary of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies[1] (Outer Space Treaty), which entered into force on 10 October 1967; the fiftieth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; and the fiftieth anniversary of the International Geophysical Year, which is being commemorated by the proclamation of 2007 as International Heliophysical Year,

Deeply convinced of the common interest of mankind in promoting and expanding the exploration and use of outer space, as the province of all mankind, for peaceful purposes and in continuing efforts to extend to all States the benefits derived therefrom, and also of the importance of international cooperation in this field, for which the United Nations should continue to provide a focal point,

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation in developing the rule of law, including the relevant norms of space law and their important role in international cooperation for the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, and of the widest possible adherence to international treaties that promote the peaceful uses of outer space in order to meet emerging new challenges, especially for developing countries,

Seriously concerned about the possibility of an arms race in outer space, and bearing in mind the importance of article IV of the Outer Space Treaty,

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 610, No. 8843.

Recognizing that all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, should contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion and strengthening of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

Considering that space debris is an issue of concern to all nations,

Noting the progress achieved in the further development of peaceful space exploration and applications as well as in various national and cooperative space projects, which contributes to international cooperation, and the importance of further developing the legal framework to strengthen international cooperation in this field,

Convinced of the importance of the recommendations in the resolution entitled "The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development", adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), held at Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999,[2] and the need to promote the use of space technology towards implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[3]

Seriously concerned about the devastating impact of disasters,[4] which cause the loss of lives and property, displace people from their homes, destroy their livelihoods and cause tremendous damage to societies around the world, and deeply convinced of the urgent need for enhanced coordination efforts at the global level to reduce the impact of disasters,

Convinced that the use of existing space technology, such as Earth observation and meteorological satellites, communications satellites and satellite navigation and positioning systems, and their applications, can play a vital role in supporting disaster management by providing accurate and timely information for decision-making and re-establishing communication in case of disasters,

Desirous of enhancing international coordination at the global level in disaster management and emergency response through greater access to and use of space-based services for all countries and facilitating capacity-building and institutional strengthening for disaster management, in particular in developing countries,

Convinced that the use of space science and technology and their applications in such areas as telemedicine, tele-education, disaster management, environmental protection and other Earth observation applications contribute to achieving the objectives of the global conferences of the United Nations that address various aspects of economic, social and cultural development, particularly poverty eradication,

Taking note, in that regard, of the fact that the 2005 World Summit recognized the important role that science and technology play in promoting sustainable development,[5]

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its fiftieth session,[6]

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[2] See *Report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Vienna, 19–30 July 1999* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.I.3), chap. I, resolution 1.

[3] See resolution 55/2.

[4] The term "disasters" refers to natural or technological disasters.

[5] See resolution 60/1, para. 60.

[6] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20).

1. *Endorses* the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its fiftieth session;[6]

2. *Urges* States that have not yet become parties to the international treaties governing the uses of outer space[7] to give consideration to ratifying or acceding to those treaties in accordance with their domestic law, as well as incorporating them in their national legislation;

3. *Notes* that, at its forty-sixth session, the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space continued its work,[8] as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/111;

4. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Committee[9] that the Legal Subcommittee, at its forty-seventh session, taking into account the concerns of all countries, in particular those of developing countries:

(*a*) Consider the following as regular agenda items:

(i) General exchange of views;

(ii) Status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space;

(iii) Information on the activities of international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations relating to space law;

(iv) Matters relating to:

a. The definition and delimitation of outer space;

b. The character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, including consideration of ways and means to ensure the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommunication Union;

(*b*) Consider the following single issues/items for discussion:

(i) Review and possible revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space;[10]

(ii) Examination and review of the developments concerning the draft protocol on matters specific to space assets to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment;

(iii) Capacity-building in space law;

(*c*) Consider the general exchange of information on national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space in accordance with the workplan adopted by the Committee;

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[7] Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 610, No. 8843); Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 672, No. 9574); Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 961, No. 13810); Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1023, No. 15020); and Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1363, No. 23002).

[8] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), chap. II.D.

[9] Ibid., paras. 216–223.

[10] See resolution 47/68.

5. *Notes* that the Legal Subcommittee, at its forty-seventh session, will submit its proposals to the Committee for new items to be considered by the Subcommittee at its forty-eighth session, in 2009;

6. *Also notes* that, in the context of paragraph 4 (*a*) (ii) above, the Legal Subcommittee, at its forty-seventh session, will reconvene its Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties on Outer Space and will review the need to extend the mandate of the Working Group beyond that session of the Subcommittee;

7. *Further notes* that, in the context of paragraph 4 (*a*) (iv) a. above, the Legal Subcommittee will reconvene its Working Group on Matters Relating to the Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space;

8. *Notes* that, in the context of paragraph 4 (*c*) above, the Legal Subcommittee will consider presentations by Member States of reports on their national legislation, according to the workplan;

9. *Also notes* that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fourth session, continued its work[11] as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/111;

10. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Committee[12] that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fifth session, taking into account the concerns of all countries, in particular those of developing countries:

(*a*) Consider the following items:

(i) General exchange of views and introduction to reports submitted on national activities;

(ii) United Nations Programme on Space Applications;

(iii) Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III);

(iv) Matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellite, including applications for developing countries and monitoring of the Earth's environment;

(v) Space debris;

(vi) Space-system-based disaster management support;

(vii) Recent developments in global navigation satellite systems;

(*b*) Consider the following items in accordance with the workplans adopted by the Committee:[13]

(i) Use of nuclear power sources in outer space;

(ii) Near-Earth objects;

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[11] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), chap. II.C.

[12] Ibid., paras. 169–175.

[13] See A/AC.105/890, annex II, para. 7, for item (i); ibid., annex III, para. 7, for item (ii); and ibid., annex I, para. 22 and A/AC.105/848, annex I, para. 22, for item (iii).

(iii) International Heliophysical Year 2007;

(*c*) Consider the following single issue/item for discussion: examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and its utilization and applications, including in the field of space communications, as well as other questions relating to developments in space communications, taking particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries;

11. *Notes* that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fifth session, will submit its proposal to the Committee for a draft provisional agenda for the forty-sixth session of the Subcommittee, in 2009;

12. *Endorses* the agreement of the Committee, at its fiftieth session, on a new approach to scheduling the symposium organized by the Committee on Space Research and the International Astronautical Federation and the industry symposium organized by the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat aimed at strengthening the partnership with industry;[14] and also endorses the recommendation of the Committee that the topic of the 2008 industry symposium should be "Space industry in emerging space nations", to be held during the first week of the forty-fifth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee;[15]

13. *Agrees* that, in the context of paragraphs 10 (*a*) (ii), (iii) and 11 above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fifth session, should reconvene the Working Group of the Whole;

14. *Also agrees* that, in the context of paragraph 10 (*b*) (i) above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fifth session, should reconvene its Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space and that the Working Group should continue its work on the topics described in the multi-year workplan as amended by the Subcommittee at its forty-second session and as agreed by the Subcommittee at its forty-fourth session and the Committee at its fiftieth session;[16]

15. *Further agrees* that, in the context of paragraph 10 (*b*) (ii) above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fifth session, should reconvene its Working Group on Near-Earth Objects, in accordance with the workplan under this item;[17]

16. *Agrees* that the Director of the secretariat of the Group on Earth Observations should be invited to report on a regular basis to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on progress made in the implementation of the ten-year implementation plan for the Global Earth Observation System of Systems and that the Chairman of the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems should be invited to report on a regular basis to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the activities of the Committee;[18]

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[14] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), para. 170; and A/AC.105/890, annex I, para. 24.

[15] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), para. 171; and A/AC.105/890, annex I, para. 25.

[16] See A/AC.105/848, annex III, para. 8; A/AC.105/890, annex II; and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), paras. 129–135.

[17] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), para. 138; and A/AC.105/890, annex III.

[18] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), para. 295.

17. *Endorses* the United Nations Programme on Space Applications for 2008, as proposed to the Committee by the Expert on Space Applications and endorsed by the Committee;[19]

18. *Notes with satisfaction* that, in accordance with paragraph 30 of General Assembly resolution 50/27 of 6 December 1995, the African regional centres for space science and technology education, in the French language and in the English language, located in Morocco and Nigeria, respectively, as well as the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education for Latin America and the Caribbean, entered into an affiliation agreement with the Office for Outer Space Affairs and have continued their education programmes in 2007;

19. *Agrees* that the regional centres referred to in paragraph 18 above should continue to report to the Committee on their activities on an annual basis;

20. *Notes with satisfaction* the contribution being made by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the efforts of Member States and the Office for Outer Space Affairs to promote and support the activities being organized within the framework of the International Heliophysical Year 2007;

21. *Also notes with satisfaction* that the second African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, the first of which was hosted by the Government of Nigeria in collaboration with the Governments of Algeria and South Africa in 2005, was hosted by the Government of South Africa from 2 to 5 October 2007 in Pretoria, and that the Conference will be held on a biennial basis;

22. *Notes with appreciation* that the Government of Ecuador hosted the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas in Quito from 24 to 28 July 2006, and that the pro tempore secretariat of the Fifth Space Conference, mandated to carry out the plan of action of the Conference, has been established by the Government of Ecuador and is being assisted by the Government of Colombia, which had hosted the Fourth Space Conference of the Americas, by the International Group of Experts of the Space Conferences of the Americas and by the Government of Guatemala, which will be the host of the Sixth Space Conference of the Americas, in 2009;

23. *Also notes with appreciation* the initiative of the Government of Chile, in cooperation with the Office for Outer Space Affairs, to hold a conference on space applications and climate change in Santiago on 1 and 2 April 2008, in the context of the International Air and Space Fair;

24. *Notes with satisfaction* the role played by these conferences in building regional and international partnerships among States;

25. *Also notes with satisfaction* that the Convention of the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization entered into force on 12 October 2006, thereby establishing the Organization, with its headquarters in Beijing;

26. *Endorses* the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;[20]

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[19] Ibid., paras. 75 and 84; and A/AC.105/874, sects. II and III and annex III.

[20] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), paras. 117 and 118 and annex.

27. *Agrees* that the voluntary guidelines for the mitigation of space debris reflect the existing practices as developed by a number of national and international organizations, and invites Member States to implement those guidelines through relevant national mechanisms;

28. *Considers* that it is essential that Member States pay more attention to the problem of collisions of space objects, including those with nuclear power sources, with space debris, and other aspects of space debris, calls for the continuation of national research on this question, for the development of improved technology for the monitoring of space debris and for the compilation and dissemination of data on space debris, also considers that, to the extent possible, information thereon should be provided to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and agrees that international cooperation is needed to expand appropriate and affordable strategies to minimize the impact of space debris on future space missions;

29. *Urges* all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes;

30. *Emphasizes* the need to increase the benefits of space technology and its applications and to contribute to an orderly growth of space activities favourable to sustained economic growth and sustainable development in all countries, including mitigation of the consequences of disasters, in particular in the developing countries;

31. *Notes* that space science and technology and their applications could make important contributions to economic, social and cultural development and welfare, as indicated in the resolution entitled "The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development",[2] its resolution 59/2 of 20 October 2004 and the Plan of Action of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;[21]

32. *Also notes* the conference "Global Development: Science and Policies for the Future", was held in Vienna on 14 and 15 November 2007, on the occasion of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis;

33. *Reiterates* that the benefits of space technology and its applications should be prominently brought to the attention, in particular, of the major United Nations conferences and summits for economic, social and cultural development and related fields and that the use of space technology should be promoted towards achieving the objectives of those conferences and summits and for implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration;[3]

34. *Notes with satisfaction* the increased efforts of the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee as well as the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities to promote the use of space science and technology and their applications in carrying out actions recommended

[21] See A/59/174, sect. VI.B.

in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation");[22]

35. *Urges* entities of the United Nations system, particularly those participating in the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, to examine, in cooperation with the Committee, how space science and technology and their applications could contribute to implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration on the development agenda, particularly in the areas relating to, inter alia, food security and increasing opportunities for education;

36. *Invites* the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities to continue to contribute to the work of the Committee and to report to the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the work conducted at its annual sessions;

37. *Notes with satisfaction* that the open informal meetings, held in conjunction with the annual sessions of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities and in which representatives of member States and observers in the Committee participate, provide a constructive mechanism for an active dialogue between the entities of the United Nations system and member States and observers in the Committee;

38. *Encourages* entities of the United Nations system to participate fully in the work of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities;

39. *Also encourages* the United Nations University, a think tank for the United Nations and several of the specialized agencies, to explore the possibilities of providing training and policy research at the crossroads of international law, climate change and outer space;

40. *Notes with satisfaction* the establishment of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER)[23] as a programme within the United Nations to provide universal access to all countries and all relevant regional and international organizations to all types of space-based information and services relevant to disaster management to support the full disaster management cycle and its implementation, highlighting the benefits that such a programme would bring to developing countries, in particular to those countries that suffer frequent disasters and that would benefit from the access to, and from the use of, space-based solutions for disaster management;

41. *Agrees* that the acronym of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response shall be UN-SPIDER, for its easier recognition as a United Nations programme;

42. *Endorses* the UN-SPIDER plan of work for 2007, the platform programme for the period 2007–2009[24] and the plan of work for the period 2008–2009,[25] and requests the Secretary-General to implement those activities that are contained in the plan of work for the period 2008–2009;

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[22] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[23] Resolution 61/110.

[24] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), para. 144.

[25] Ibid., para. 149; and A/AC.105/894.

43. *Requests* the Committee to continue to consider, as a matter of priority, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, and agrees that during its consideration of the matter, the Committee could continue to consider ways to promote regional and interregional cooperation based on experiences stemming from the Space Conference of the Americas, the African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development and the role space technology could play in the implementation of recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

44. *Notes with satisfaction* that the Committee established a closer link between its work to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development by contributing to the thematic areas that are addressed by the Commission,[26] and agrees that the Director of the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat should be invited to participate in the sessions of the Committee to inform it how it could best contribute to the work of the Commission and that the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs should participate in the sessions of the Commission to raise awareness and promote the benefits of space science and technology for sustainable development;

45. *Notes with appreciation* that the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems was established on a voluntary basis as an informal body to promote cooperation, as appropriate, on matters of mutual interest related to civil satellite-based positioning, navigation, timing and value-added services, as well as the compatibility and interoperability of global navigation satellite systems, while increasing their use to support sustainable development, particularly in developing countries, and that it held its first meeting in Vienna, on 1 and 2 November 2006,[27] and its second meeting in Bangalore, India, from 4 to 7 September 2007;

46. *Notes with satisfaction* that UN-SPIDER and the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems were established as concrete results of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III;

47. *Notes* the fact that the Office for Outer Space Affairs could integrate into its programme of work a number of actions identified for implementation by the Office in the Plan of Action of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for the further implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III[28] and that some of those actions could be integrated into its programme of work only if additional staff and financial resources were to be provided;[29]

48. *Urges* all Member States to contribute to the Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications to enhance the capacity of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to provide technical and legal advisory services and initiate pilot projects in accordance with the Plan of Action of the Committee, while maintaining the priority thematic areas agreed by the Committee;

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[26] See A/AC.105/872 and A/AC.105/892.

[27] See A/AC.105/879.

[28] See A/AC.105/L.262.

[29] Ibid., annex, para. 6.

49. *Agrees* that the Committee should continue to consider a report on the activities of the International Satellite System for Search and Rescue as a part of its consideration of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications under the agenda item entitled "Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee", and invites Member States to report on their activities regarding the System;

50. *Requests* the Committee to continue to consider, at its fifty-first session, its agenda item entitled "Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status";

51. *Also requests* the Committee, in view of the importance of space and education, to continue to consider, at its fifty-first session, under its agenda item entitled "Space and society", the special theme for the focus of discussions "Space and education", in accordance with the workplan adopted by the Committee;[30]

52. *Agrees* that the Committee should continue to consider, at its fifty-first session, its agenda item entitled "Space and water";

53. *Notes with satisfaction* that the Committee considered, at its fiftieth session, under its agenda item entitled "Other matters", the issue of the future role and activities of the Committee, and agrees that the consideration of the future role and activities of the Committee should be continued at the fifty-first session of the Committee, and in the margin of the forty-fifth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and of the forty-seventh session of the Legal Subcommittee;

54. *Agrees* that the Committee should continue to consider, at its fifty-first session, its agenda item entitled "International cooperation in promoting the use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development", in accordance with the multi-year workplan adopted by the Committee;[31]

55. *Acknowledges* the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the period 2008–2009, as reflected in paragraph 50 of its resolution 61/111, and agrees that the Committee and its Subcommittees should elect their officers at their respective sessions in 2008 in accordance with that composition;[32]

56. *Decides* that Bolivia and Switzerland shall become members of the Committee;

57. *Endorses* the decision of the Committee to grant permanent observer status to the African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing;

58. *Notes* that each of the regional groups has the responsibility for actively promoting the participation in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies of the member States of the Committee that are also members of the respective regional groups, and agrees that the regional groups should consider this Committee-related matter among their members;

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[30] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/58/20), para. 239; and ibid., *Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), paras. 234 and 253.

[31] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/61/20), paras. 301–303; and ibid., *Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), paras. 265 and 281.

[32] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), paras. 286 and 287.

59. *Requests* entities of the United Nations system and other international organizations to continue and, where appropriate, to enhance their cooperation with the Committee and to provide it with reports on the issues dealt with in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

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